

**AGENDA ITEM V H**

**PROGRESS REPORT ON CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PROGRAMS**

**NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY AND FLETCHER TECHNICAL  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**ARTICULATION BETWEEN THE  
A.S. IN NURSING AT FLETCHER AND THE B.S. IN NURSING AT  
NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY**

## **AGENDA ITEM V H**

### **PROGRESS REPORT ON CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PROGRAMS**

#### **NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY AND FLETCHER TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

#### **ARTICULATION BETWEEN THE A.S. IN NURSING AT FLETCHER AND THE B.S. IN NURSING AT NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY**

##### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

At its meeting of June 26, 2008, the Board took the following action:

**The Board of Regents hereby terminates the A.S. in Nursing (CIP Code 51.1601) program at Nicholls State University, effective immediately. By June 1, 2009, Nicholls and Fletcher Technical Community College shall submit a joint report to the Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs, documenting finalization of an articulation plan assuring maximum transfer of credits between Fletcher's A.S. in Nursing program and Nicholls' B.S. in Nursing program.**

##### **STAFF ANALYSIS**

An Articulation Plan for Nursing in Louisiana was presented by the Nursing Supply and Demand Commission to the Joint Legislative Committee on Health and Welfare on April 6, 1993. Subsequent legislation charged nursing boards with review of standards and action necessary to implement the articulated curricula, which permit the maximum amount of prior training to be credited against the requirements of subsequent nursing education programs. Nicholls has been in compliance with the abovementioned mandate since Fall 1994. Building upon this existing mechanism, a report was received from Nicholls State University in April 2009, addressing articulation from the Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) at Fletcher into the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) at Nicholls. The plan is explained below.

##### **General Expectations**

1. The student must meet admission requirements of the University, College of Nursing and Allied Health and Department of Nursing.
2. He/she must satisfy all pre-requisite and/or general education core requirements for the degree.
3. He/she must be a graduate of a state licensing board approved program and a nationally accredited program.

### **Criteria for Admission/Retention/Progression**

1. Official transcripts from all institutions attended must be on file, with the application for the BSN program.
2. Yearly documentation of unencumbered Louisiana RN licensure must be maintained.
3. A minimum grade of “C” and a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 must be maintained for all required courses in the curriculum.
4. A student is permitted one failure or withdrawal in N226, N417, N420, N427, N428 and N440.
5. Requirements for graduation must be completed within seven years of the date of entry into N417.
6. Prior to entry into any clinical nursing course, evidence of the following must be provided:
  - Negative TB skin test or x-ray;
  - Hepatitis B immunization series;
  - Positive Rubella titer or vaccine.
7. The student must earn at least 33 credit hours in residence and earn a majority of the credits in the BSN through Nicholls University.

### **Transfer Courses**

The protocol for obtaining credit for transfer course substitutions was provided. Requests may be submitted for work equivalent to courses at Nicholls if a grade of C or better has been earned at a regionally accredited college or university. Credit is awarded following approval by the Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

### **Credit by Examination**

A list of general education and nursing courses for which credit may be earned by successful examination was provided by Nicholls. The protocol for achieving credit is explained to incoming students. Credit examinations once failed may not be repeated.

### **Transition Course**

Upon completion of the *transition* or *bridge* course, NURS 417, a total of 33 nursing credit hours may be awarded. Specific courses for which credit is awarded were listed; they comprise a substantial component of the credit hours in nursing courses required for the degree.

### **Specific Courses to Be Taken at Nicholls**

NURS 428 Experience in Professional Nursing and 440 Nursing Theory and Research must be taken at NSU.

### **Estimated Time to Completion**

If students are enrolled at Nicholls full-time (FT), they complete the RN to BSN program in three semesters. One semester is necessary to complete the additional general education courses required for the bachelor's program, which usually include humanities and social studies. Satisfaction of general education requirements is a pre-requisite for admission into the RN to BSN transition or *bridge* course, which with Nursing 226 and 440 constitutes a full semester of coursework. One additional semester of FT coursework completes the curriculum. However, most students are not able to enroll FT; the nursing shortage prevents employed students from obtaining adequate time away from work to schedule classes.

### **Specific Exception**

Because the ASN program at Fletcher Technical Community College (FTCC) is not currently accredited by the National League of Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC), RNs from the most recent graduating class will be admitted on a one time waiver of the requirement that they graduate from a nationally accredited program. It is expected that by the time entering RNs complete coursework required for admission into the transition/bridge course, Fletcher's ASN program will have earned NLNAC accreditation which will be retroactive to include recent graduates.

### **Campus Assessment**

The institution reports that, based on the success rate of RNs entering into its BSN program, it considers its articulation plan to be quite satisfactory.

## **STAFF SUMMARY**

The staff interprets that the articulation plan for registered nurses to enter the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at Nicholls is working well. As Fletcher's first class of ASN graduates are being granted a specific exception for admission into the BSN at Nicholls, pending attainment of NLNAC accreditation, it appears that closing of the associate-level program at Nicholls while opening a program at FTCC has provided ample opportunities for students while maintaining a supply of registered nurses for the Thibodaux area.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

*The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee receive the joint report from Fletcher Technical Community College and Nicholls State University addressing an articulation plan assuring maximum transfer of credits between Fletcher's A.S. in Nursing program and Nicholls' B.S. in Nursing program. Upon attainment of SACS institutional accreditation and NLN program accreditation at Fletcher, both institutions will revisit this issue to determine if further refinements are possible.*